

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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FM AMCONSUL BUKAVU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0411

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUKAVU 020

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, CG

SUBJECT: REACTION IN BUKAVU TO THE INVASION OF SHABA: UPDATE

REF: BUKAVU 0016

1. REACTIONS TO THE FIGHTING IN SHABA CONTINUE TO VARY AND FLUCTUATE DEPENDING ON THE LATEST RUMOR OR FOREIGN NEWS BROADCAST. NEWS CONTINUES TO BE SPOTTY AND OFTEN CONTRADICTORY, AND PEOPLE ARE STILL TAKING A WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE.

2. MISSIONARIES REPORT THAT THE FEELINGS AMONG RURAL INHABITANTS OF KIVU ARE OF DISSATISFACTION WITH THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND OF TRIBAL DISTRUST OF THE KATANGANS. THIS TRIBALISM IS WEAKER IN THE CITY, WHERE THE POPULACE OF BUKAVU'S CITE CONTINUES TO HOPE THAT THE INVASION WILL LEAD TO A CHANGE, ANY CHANGE. IN BOTH CASES THERE IS NONE OF THE FEAR AND PANIC WHICH WERE COMMON DURING THE UPRISINGS OF THE 1960'S.

3. MISSIONARIES WORKING BY THE MAIN ARMY CAMP HERE REPORT THAT THE COMMON SOLDIERS DESCRIBE THEMSELVES AS "NEUTRAL". AMONG

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THE OFFICERS THERE IS DISTASTE FOR THE PRESENT REGIME BUT ALSO SUSPICION OF THE MOTIVES OF THE KATANGANS.

4. SOME TOP OFFICIALS ARE VERY WORRIED, ESPECIALLY THE CND AND OTHER SECURITY PEOPLE WHO TEND TO COME FROM MOBUTU'S HOME REGION. THE CND CHIEF OF GOMA RECENTLY TOLD A UN OFFICIAL OF HIS DESIRE TO EVACUATE HIS FAMILY AND OF HIS BELIEF THAT THE FALL OF SHABA

WAS INEVITABLE. MISSIONARIES IN BARAKA AND BUKAVU HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY MILITARY OFFICERS WANTING REFUGE OR EVACUATION FOR THEIR FAMILIES IF THE SITUATION DETERIORATES.

5. AMONG ACADEMIA, THE BUREAUCRACY, AND THE REST OF MIDDLE-CLASS BUKAVU, THERE IS A STAMPEDE TO CLIMB ABOARD AND STRADDLE THE FENCE. A DIRECTOR OF THE PHARMAKINA QUININE PLANT JOKINGLY REMARKED THAT HIS MID- AND UPPER-LEVEL ZAIROIS EMPLOYEES ARE INCREASINGLY FORGETFUL ABOUT WEARING THEIR MPR-MOBUTU BREAST PINS. AT THE SAME TIME, THE INCREASING NUMBER OF ARRESTS OF THOSE VOICING DISAPPROVAL OF THE GUIDE OR DOUBT ABOUT HIS ARMY HAS CAUSED ALL ZAIROIS TO BE MORE RETICENT. THE DISLIKE OF MOBUTU BY THE MIDDLE CLASS IS AS STRONG AS EVER, BUT SO ALSO IS THEIR FEAR OF COMMITTING THEMSELVES PREMATURELY AND INCORRECTLY.

6. THE ORGANIZED OPPOSITION HAS RESURFACED, ALBEIT ON A SMALL SCALE. ON APRIL 11 THE CONSULATE RECEIVED A LEAFLET FROM THE NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE CONGO, POSTMARKED BUKAVU. ACCORDING TO A LOCAL JOURNALIST A LARGE BATCH OF SUCH MAILINGS WAS INTERCEPTED AT THE MOST OFFICE HERE LAST WEEK.

7. THOSE EUROPEANS WHO REMEMBER 1967 ARE STILL CONCERNED THAT A SIMILAR BREAKDOWN OF LAW AND ORDER COULD OCCUR, ESPECIALLY THAT THE ARMY MIGHT MUTINY, LOOT, AND PILLAGE. FEW FEEL THAT SUCH A RETURN TO VIOLENCE IS PROBABLE, BUT ALL ARE HEDGING THEIR BETS. THE AMERICAN MISSIONARIES ARE REVIEWING THEIR EVACUATION PLANS AND GETTING THEIR PAPERS IN ORDER, MANY MERCHANTS ARE DRAWING DOWN INVENTORIES, AND MANY PEOPLE ARE INCREASING THEIR HOLDINGS OF RWANDAN FRANCS AND OTHER FOREIGN CURRENCIES. BUSINESSMEN

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REPORT THAT SALES OF NON-ESSENTIAL ITEMS ARE DOWN.

8. AMONG EUROPEANS AND THE MORE TALKATIVE ZAIROIS, THE FEELING STEADILY GREW DURING THE FIRST WEEKS OF THE FIGHTING THAT MOBUTU'S LUCK MAY HAVE FINALLY RUN OUT. MOST FEEL THAT HE BROUGHT THE TROUBLE ON HIMSELF BY GROSS MISMANAGEMENT AND CORRUPTION. HOWEVER, SINCE THE MILITARY SITUATION HAS STABILIZED AND IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT FOREIGN TROOPS WILL DEFEND KOLWEZI, THERE HAS BEEN MORE CONFIDENCE THAT MOBUTU MAY SURVIVE AGAIN AFTER ALL. ABOVE ALL, INTEREST REMAINS HIGH, AND FEW EXPECT THE TROUBLE TO END ABRUPTLY ANY TIME SOON.

BOWEN

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Message Attributes

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